

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-10 SSO-00 NSCE-00

INRE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-05

SAM-01 SAJ-01 /084 W

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O R 241103Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1948

INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 3575

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SS SP MO UN

SUBJ: SPANISH POLICY STATEMENT ON SAHARA

REF: MADRID 3382

1. FOLLOWING IS FREE TRANSLATION OF SUBSTANTIVE PORTION OF TEXT  
OF SPANISH GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ON SPANISH SAHARA RELEASED MAY 23  
FOLLOWING CONCLUSION OF COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING:

A. SPAIN DOES NOT INTEND IN ANY WAY TO PROLONG ITS STAY  
IN SAHARA, FROM WHICH IT NEVER SOUGHT ANY POLITICAL OR MATERIAL  
ADVANTAGE, AND TOWARD WHICH IT HAS BEEN FULFILLING AS WELL AS  
POSSIBLE ITS DUTIES TOWARD THE TERRITORY AND ITS NATIVE POPULA-  
TION;

B. IN THIS CONSISTENT LINE OF ACTION SPAIN HAS ACCEPTED THE  
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UN RESOLUTIONS LEADING TO APPLICATION IN SAHARA OF SELF-DETER-

MINATION, EVEN SETTING FORTH A TIMETABLE FOR REQUIRED REFERENDUM;

C. IN SUCH A SITUATION -- AND RESERVING ITS POINT OF VIEW CONCERNING ANY TERRITORIAL CLAIM TOWARD SAHARA ON PART OF OTHER STATES -- SPAIN, IN HOPE OF NOT IMPEDING ANY EFFORT AT INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, DID NOT OPPOSE THE UN APPROVED PETITION TO SEEK ADVISORY OPINION FROM ICJ. SPAIN DID SO IN THE AWARENESS THAT THE PROCESS FOR SUCH A RULING WOULD REPRESENT A NOTABLE DELAY IN ITS OWN PLANS, WITH THE EFFECT OF PROLONGING MORE THAN INTENDED SPAIN'S PRESENCE AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE TERRITORY;

D. MEANWHILE THE SITUATION IN SAHARA HAS BEEN PROGRESSIVELY DETERIORATING AS CONSEQUENCE OF TENSIONS, CONFUSION AND UNCERTAINTY, WHICH, WITH DIVERSE ORIGINS AND CAUSES, HAVE DEVELOPED IN RECENT WEEKS, BUT WHICH REVEAL IN ANY CASE A STATE OF OPINION IN THE TERRITORY ROUNDLY IN FAVOR OF INDEPENDENCE;

SUCH A SITUATION, WHICH AFFECTS SPANISH CIVILIAN POPULATION, HAS SERVED AT SAME TIME TO BRING OUT THE HIGH SPIRIT OF DISCIPLINE, PREPARATION AND PATRIOTISM OF OUR ARMED FORCES STATIONED THERE;

E. IN LIGHT OF FOREGOING: THE GOVERNMENT CONFIRMS ITS DESIRE TO COMPLY WITH APPROVED UN RESOLUTIONS, DECLARES ITS INTENTION TO TRANSFER THE SOVEREIGNTY IN THE TERRITORY OF SAHARA IN THE SHORTEST TIME POSSIBLE, IN THE WAY MOST CONVENIENT TO ITS INHABITANTS, AND TO SATISFACTION AS NECESSARY OF ANY LEGITIMATE ASPIRATION OF INTERESTED COUNTRIES IN THAT ZONE, BUT WITHOUT PREJUDICING THE DEFENSE OF SPAIN'S INTERESTS IN SAID TERRITORY WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK AND CHANNELS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW. THE REQUIRED PROCEDURES TO BRING THIS ABOUT ARE BEING INITIATED IN THE SPANISH CORTES (PARLIAMENT).

F. AT SAME TIME IT SHOULD BE POINTED OUT THAT IF, BECAUSE OF CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND SPAIN'S CONTROL, THERE SHOULD BE A DELAY IN THE POSSIBILITY OF CONDUCTING SUCH A TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY WITH CONDITIONS THAT MIGHT SERIOUSLY COMPROMISE THE SPANISH PRESENCE IN SAHARA, SPAIN RESERVES THE RIGHT, WITH PRIOR TIMELY NOTIFICATION TO THE UN, TO HASTEN THE TRANSFER OF POWER, PUTTING A DEFINITIVE END TO HER PRESENCE IN THE TERRITORY.  
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2. COMMENT: STATE IS FIRST PUBLIC RECOGNITION BY GOS THAT IT NOW LAYS GREATEST EMPHASIS ON GETTING OUT OF SAHARA QUICKLY AND THAT IT DOES NOT RULE OUT UNILATERAL WITHDRAWAL -- REGARDLESS OF STATUS OF UN-ICJ PROCEDURES -- IF SITUATION BECOMES TOO DIFFICULT, SINCE LAST THING SPAIN WANTS IS A "COLONIAL WAR". STATEMENT IS ALSO CLEAREST PUBLIC RECOGNITION TO DATE THAT SPAIN PREPARED

TO TAKE "LEGITIMATE INTERESTS" OF OTHER INTERESTED STATES  
IN AREA INTO ACCOUNT IN TRANSFERRING SOVEREIGNTY. AS SUCH,  
STATEMENT IS PROBABLY SIGNAL OF GREATER WILLINGNESS TO  
NEGOTIATE. POLICY TURNABOUT CAME FOLLOWING SERIES OF  
SETBACKS AND DISAPPOINTMENTS FOR SPANISH IN RECENT WEEKS IN  
PREPARING SAHARA FOR INDEPENDENCE AND CONTROLLING PUBLIC ORDER.  
CHIEF AMONG THEM HAVE BEEN EMERGENCE OF MILITANT AND ANTI-SPANISH  
FPOLISARIO AS DOMINANT POLITICAL AND INSURGENT FORCE IN  
AREA, FAILURE OF SPAIN'S OWN PRO-SPANISH INDEPENDENCE PARTY  
(PUNS), AND DEMONSTRATED LACK OF STRONG IDENTIFICATION WITH SPAIN  
AMONG MUCH OF CIVIL POPULATION AND EVEN AMONG SAHARAN ARMED  
FORCES AND POLICE. MORE LIBERAL PRESS HAS HAILED STATEMENT,  
THOUGH QUESTION HAS ALREADY BEEN RAISED WHETHER WHAT MAY BE  
SEEN AS ACT OF "ABANDONISMO" BY ARIAS GOVERNMENT WILL FURTHER  
MOBILIZE RIGHT-WING AGAINST IT.  
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